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astories

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Good

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An  
Inaugural Essay  
on the Gods  
by

~~William~~

A Murray

admitted March 19. 1819

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Among all the diseases to which the human body is liable, very few are more distressing and difficult to be removed than the gaut. It is a disease which varies so much in its symptoms and appearances according to the different parts of the system which it attacks that it is exceedingly difficult to give a correct history of it, however I shall endeavour in the following pages to deliver what appears to me to be the true history, pathology, and method of cure of this very inveterate disease.

### Of the History.

The gaut, from time immemorial, has been and still is by many, I believe, considered to be a hereditary disease, and to be produced in most cases without the application of the usual remote and exciting causes, which others imagine to be indispen-





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-ally necessary to its production. Now for this  
opinion may be correct I am not pre-  
pared to say from my own observation,  
though I am disposed to concur with  
Dr. Rush in the belief that it is often  
dependent on a hereditary predisposition,  
propagated from parents to their offspring,  
in which case less force in exciting  
causes will induce the disease than in  
such persons as have not received such  
a predisposition or susceptibility, if I may  
so speak, from their ancestors.

Moreover, if it depended entirely on a  
hereditary predisposition or occurred only in  
such persons as were born of gouty parents  
it would be a much <sup>less</sup> ~~more~~ frequent disease  
than it is.

This opinion, from the weight of argu-  
-ments that might be brought against it, would  
appear utterly repugnant to common obser-

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-ation, for how often do we see the disease  
to originate in persons who have been sud-  
denly raised to affluent circumstances from  
poverty, or at least from a condition in  
which they were obliged to labour for  
the means of subsistence. On the contrary  
many, who have been unfortunate and reduc-  
ed to the necessity of labouring for a  
support, have lost, together with their fortunes  
every symptom of gouty affection.

Numerous instances to prove the connec-  
-tion of the above observation, might be  
adduced, but the fact is so well known  
to the generality of physicians that I think  
it unnecessary to mention any.

Upon the whole I conclude with Dr. Ross  
that the gout "is only hereditary as far as  
fortune and its attendants ease, indolence,  
luxury, habits of intemperance, both in eating  
and drinking, and that predisposition which



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arise from a strong and vigorous constitution,  
are hereditary?"

The disease is said to attack most commonly, the male sex, and such of that sex as belong principally to the sanguine temperament; but I believe that females who indulge in dissipation, are as often subjects to the gout as males, though the disease does not so often take on, what is called the regular form of it, in the former as in the latter, but shows itself in various affections of the stomach and uterus which are most generally termed nervous or hysterical.

The gout does not often make its attacks upon persons who have not arrived at the period of puberty or those in old age, yet there are cases on record of its appearing very early in life, namely, at the age of six years. When it does appear at such an



early period of life, it seems to be only in such  
as have a very strong predisposition to the dis-  
ease, or who have been exposed to the remote &  
exciting cause of it in a greater degree than  
ordinary. Nearly the same observation may be  
applied to sunstroke.

Gout, by medicalists, has been divided into four  
kinds, namely, regular, atonic, misplaced and re-  
trocedent, but for this I can see no sufficient rea-  
son, and am disposed to reject altogether the  
two last species or divisions, at least, for I do  
not believe that the extremities, any more than  
the liver, stomach, or other viscera, are the seat  
of a regular paroxysm of gout, though the dis-  
ease may in more numerous instances, attack the  
former than the latter, gradually and with more  
of the paroxysmal symptoms. However for the  
sake of perspicuity I shall make use of these terms  
as often as I shall have occasion, inasmuch as  
they serve to convey tolerably correct ideas of





the phenomena of the disease, according to the various ways by which it makes its attacks.

A paroxysm of ague, or such as make its appearance about the ligaments, tendons and joints of the extremities, sometimes, though very rarely, I apprehend, comes on without any premonition, but is most generally ushered in by such symptoms as the following, coldness of the extremities, numbness or torpor and pricking along the thighs and legs, painful contractions of the muscles of the leg &c. together with languor and listlessness of the whole body, indigestion, want of appetite, flatulency, some evolutions &c.

The paroxysm does not always immediately follow these symptoms, but is sometimes a week or more in making its appearance.

It is said to come on for the most part in the Spring of the year, and to be perceived early in the morning, though rarely in the evening, and begins with a pain in one or both feet



often in the joint of the great toe or other parts of the foot. During this process there is usually some coldness and shivering, which, as it subsides is followed by considerable fever and increase of heat and pain which, after continuing with increasing violence for about twenty-four hours, gradually abate and perhaps cease entirely to return no more, at least, not till after a great while.

After the disease has often appeared in the extremities of the same person the pains are said not to be so violent as they were at first, but the patient is more affected with gouty symptoms in his stomach, that organ having become debilitated from the repeated attacks of the disease, it at last begins to reign triumphant there.

In those persons who are more liable to the disease from hereditary susceptibility and who have suffered repeated paroxysms, there are excoriations of a chafy nature, about the joints, in the cellular membranes for the most part immediately under the skin.



These concretions appear to be deposited first in a fluid form and to acquire consistency and hardness from the absorption of their fluid part. It seems to be a deposition, which is the consequence of great increased morbid action in the parts, whereby the capillary vessels are induced to take on a kind of secretion, which I may say is analogous to the other secretions of disease, such as the virus of gonorrhoea, &c. &c.

These chelly concretions are not confined to the neighbourhood of joints entirely, but manifest themselves by their appearance in the urine of such persons as have been several years afflicted with the disease. They also appear, though less frequently in the parenchymatous substance of the lungs, gall-bladder &c. In fine let them be found in what part of the body they may, they are all a consequence of diseased secretion, that is, if the person in whom they are found, be an old subject from the gout. These concretions are the



Strong holds of the humoral pathologists when they  
endeavored to prove that a paroxysm of gout  
depended upon a vitiated condition of the humors  
of the body or when they tried to refute the ar-  
guments advanced to overthrow their theory, but  
it is evident they did not consider, or would  
not acknowledge, that they ~~they~~ were the effects  
of local diseased action, and not the cause of  
the disease. From the experiments of Pearson and  
Wollaston, it appears that these concretions  
are composed of the lithic or uric acid and  
Soda.

### Pathology

For the better illustration of the nature and path-  
ology of the gout, I shall first enumerate some of  
the most obvious causes on which it depends, both ac-  
ute and existing and afterwards mention some of  
the symptoms and affections which vary from what  
is called a regular or legitimate paroxysm of  
gout.





The causes of gout, whatever they may be, are all such as make a primary impression on the stomach and then disturb its regular order of healthy functions, or in other words produce debility in it, which debility is transferred to other parts of the body. I shall not repeat what I have said before on the hereditary nature of this disease, but proceed to speak of the remote causes independently of any hereditary predisposition.

1<sup>st</sup>. The most common and most potent of them is the potation of wine and other fermented liquors and ardent spirits. Dr. Darwin says that the latter are absolutely necessary to produce that form of the gout, which appears in the ligaments of the extremities. Women, we know, are, in general, much less subject to the disease than men, in these parts, and perhaps we may urge as a reason for it, that they do not indulge to such excess in the potation of wine and ardent spirits as the male sex.

Dr. Rush tells us that wines of all kinds are

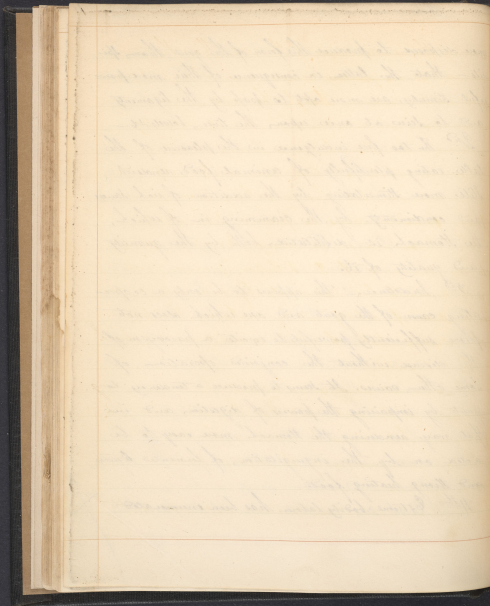


more disposed to produce this form of the gout than, spi-  
rits— that the latter, in consequence of their more pow-  
erful stimulus, are more apt to pass by the ligaments  
and to seize at once upon the toes, &c. &c.—

2<sup>d</sup> The too free indulgence in the pleasures of the  
table, eating plentifully of animal food, rendered  
still more stimulating by the addition of rich sauces  
and condiments, by the cramming in of which,  
the stomach is debilitated, both by the quantity  
and quality of it.

3<sup>d</sup> Indolence.— This appears to be only a co-oper-  
ating cause of the gout and one which does not  
prove sufficiently powerful to excite a paroxysm of  
the disease without the conjoined operation of  
some other cause. It seems to produce a tendency to  
gout by impairing the powers of digestion and in  
that way rendering the stomach more easy to be  
acted on by the ingurgitation of fermented liquors  
and strong heating food.

4<sup>th</sup> Extreme bodily labour has been enumerated



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among the remote causes of the gout. How this can operate as an ~~equaling~~ remote cause of gout I cannot easily conceive, though the most rational explanation of it seems to be that it ultimately debilitates the stomach, in a manner equivalent to indolence, which, at first view, might appear to be a paradox, but there is nothing more common than, farulike causes to produce like effects.

5<sup>th</sup> Intemperance in revery. Excess in revery, to use the words of Dr. Boerhaave, "produces gout not primarily but secondarily by inducing a general state of debility and by weakening the power of digestion, both of which circumstances are causes of the gout."

6<sup>th</sup> Acids and acrimony are mentioned by Dr. Cullen among the causes of the gout, and that they may assist in producing that disease by impairing the tone of the stomach and consequently the digestive power, is not to be doubted.

7<sup>th</sup> Much application to study is, perhaps as apt



to produce weakness of the stomach as any of the remote causes which have been mentioned with the exception of wine and spirits. Especially when aided by its almost constant attendants, smoking.

8<sup>th</sup> Strong tea and coffee, when indulged in to excess are often the remote causes of gout in the female sex. When the gout originates from ~~from~~ the last mentioned causes it generally shows itself in various affections of the stomach and uterus which are called nervous or hysterical.

That the use of strong tea predisposes to the gout is moreover inferred by Dr Rush from its frequency at Japan, where that article is used in large quantities.

9<sup>th</sup> The violent exercise of the passions and of the imagination, also great repation, may I presume occasionally debilitate the stomach to such a degree as to be followed by a fit of the gout, when conjoined with the more powerful causes.

Having enumerated the usual remote causes





of gout. I go on to speak of the exciting causes.

The exciting causes of gout are all those that produce irregular or morbid excitement, by operating on the system, rendered weak, and excitable from the action of the forementioned remote causes.

They are often a sudden application of the remote causes, and are either stimulating or laxative.

The remote causes may operate as exciting causes by acting on the system after it has been rendered excitable and debilitated by the previous operation of the same causes; that is, after one application of remote causes, debility and excitability are produced, then a second application of the same kind of causes, instead of inducing debility act as irritants and produce excitement in the system already rendered excitable.

These exciting causes are, 1<sup>st</sup> A hearty meal of rich animal food 2<sup>nd</sup> A fit of intoxication.  
3<sup>rd</sup> Potation of acid and then wine and beer.  
4<sup>th</sup> The sudden excitement of the passions in joy



or anger. 5<sup>th</sup> Violent and sudden exercise of the body or mind. Dr Rush mentions certain exciting causes which he calls sedatives, such as, "bleeding, purging, vomiting, fasting, cold, fear, grief, even in venery and the debility left in the system by the crisis of a fever." I do not admit these to be exciting causes, but I hold that they only increase the debility and disorder of the stomach which precede a paroxysm of the disease, for he immediately afterwards says "the abstraction of a natural and habitual impulsion of any kind, by increasing the force of those which remain, renders the production of morbid and convulsive actions in the system as much the effects of puternaturals and disproportioned stimulus, as if they were induced by causes that were external and evidently stimulating." In such a case the natural functions which support life, as the pulsation of the heart & arteries &c. become the exciting causes instead of those mentioned, which only induce additional debility.



Having now enumerated the remote and exciting causes of the gout, I shall proceed to speak of the affections which are vicarious to "regular paroxysms" of that disease.

Of all parts of the body the liver appears to suffer most from the gout. From the vicinity of this viscus to the stomach and the enormous quantity of blood carried to it by the vena portarum, as well as by the hepatic artery, it is easy to conceive that it must frequently be very much affected in this disease. The consequences of gout in the liver are Schirrhosity, the formation of gall-stones, increased quantity of black bile, jaundice and sometimes suppuration. These effects appear most commonly in hot climates and in those persons who indulge habitually and freely in the use of ardent spirits. We see how the symptoms of gout and chronic hepatitis, they appear indeed sometimes to be identical, but are brought on different remote causes.



2<sup>nd</sup> The lungs often suffer very considerably from attacks of this disease. It produces in them, both true and bastard pneumonia, haemoptysis, asthma, and pulmonary consumption.

3<sup>rd</sup> It often attacks the stomach, with all the violence with which it seizes on the extremities. It is so violent in some cases as to put on many of the symptoms of yellow fever. It also attacks the other parts of the alimentary canal in the form of colic, dysentery and diarrhoea.

The piles <sup>are</sup> often consequences of the gout, but whether they arise from the gout attacking the rectum, or from a choked condition, of the blood vessels induced by gout and consequent sclerosis in the liver, I cannot exactly say, though I am rather disposed to adopt the latter opinion. In fine I think the piles always originate in the last mentioned way, whether they are attendant on gout or not.

4<sup>th</sup> It attacks the brain, producing in it





Violent and distressing headaches, apoplexy and other affections which arise as consequences of fulness of the vessels and inflammation, in that viscus, in other cases.

5<sup>th</sup> From the great sympathy existing between the stomach and uterus it is reasonable to suppose that the gout often attacks that organ. And this opinion is countenanced by fact, for it is often the seat of gout which is indicated by very alarming and distressing uterine hæmorrhages.

6<sup>th</sup> The kidneys, next to the liver, are often affected with sympathetic gout than any of the viscera. Its effects in them, are stanguity, calculi, diastetes and a chronic pain attended, sometimes with discharges of bloody urine. The neck of the bladder is often the seat of the gout, it is attended by a mucous discharge from the urethra, which has induced some to call it a catarrh of the bladder.

7<sup>th</sup> The lymphatic and glandular systems are of



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-ten attacked with gout. Bubbles, salivation, dropsy,  
swelling in the breasts of females, scrophula, have  
all been known to arise in persons who were subject  
to fits of the gout.

8<sup>th</sup> The skin is sometimes affected with gout  
in the form of Erysipelas, tetter &c.—

After the gout has attacked for several years  
in some paroxysms, it often does great injury  
to the bones by causing effusions into the joints  
by which the bones are dislocated. These effusions  
probably consist of the same kind of deposition  
which takes place in other parts of the body  
to wit, about the ligaments of the joints, in  
the cellular membranes, gall bladder, pelvis of the  
kidneys and urinary bladder. And it appears to me  
that these calculi which are formed in the bladder  
of gouty persons are always of the same composi-  
tion, however they may be varied in other cases, the  
gouty diathesis producing the same kind of effu-  
sion in all parts of the body indiscriminately.



I shall now proceed as well as I can, to treat particularly of the nature or pathology of this powerful disease.

Various have been the theories which have been advanced at different times, by different writers to explain the nature of it, but none of them are satisfactory.

The very name of gout, which is derived from the French word "goutte" which signifies "a drop" evidently denotes that the disease was supposed to consist in a vitiated state or condition, of the fluids of the body, though there were different opinions among the older writers respecting the kind of fluid which became vitiated, some supposing that it was the blood, others the nervous liquor &c. But Willis maintained that it depended upon a mixture of saline matter deposited from the blood by the capillary arteries, and an acid humor deposited by the nerves which coming into contact in ligamentous parts unite and produce



a violent effluence, which irritating and pricking  
the nervous fibres, as it were, by their acrimony, pro-  
duce a paroxysm of gout. In this case he compares  
the same matter, deposited about the ligaments to the  
~~the~~ female ovum or semen, which, of itself, is inca-  
pable of springing into action, until the nervous  
liquor discharges upon it its acrid recumens, which  
like the male semen, under the former prolific, and  
begets a paroxysm of gout.

Whatever may be the opinions of other persons, re-  
specting the nature of this disease, I am led, from  
the purgatory symptoms of it, as nausea, want of  
appetite, indigestion, flatulency, sour eructations, con-  
stipation &c. to place the root of the disease in the  
Stomach, which, sympathizing with all other parts of  
the body, throws the disease as it were, from itself  
to those parts which are by any means rendered most  
susceptible of being attacked by it, or on those  
which are farthest from the source of vitality, and which  
consequently are most apt to be debilitated and dis-





-posed to take on reaction, from the force of excitement.

I am supported in this opinion by those of some of the most respectable Physicians, especially the professor of the theory and practice of medicine in this university. If Richter should place rheumatism in the alimentary canal, in the form of Diarrhoea Dysenteria, what objection can be urged against the Gout being seated in the same parts, or at least having its origin there?

This opinion is moreover consistent with the method of cure which has been found to succeed best in the hands of some of the best practitioners, namely, purging.

Dr. Cullen, also, although, he does not positively say that the disease has its origin in the primæ viæ, asserts that the Stomach is the internal part that is the most frequently and often very considerably affected by the gout. The paroxysms of the disease, he says, are commonly preceded by an affection of the Stomach, many of the existing causes act



first upon the Stomach, and the symptoms of the atonic and ulcerulent gout are most commonly and chiefly affections of that organ.

Upon the whole then, I conclude, that the gout is an inflammatory affection of the whole system brought on by causes which act in the first place on the Stomach, debilitating it and altering its regular train of healthy functions, and that from the great nervous communication which it has with all other parts of the body, excitement and morbid increased action arise in such parts as happen from various causes to be weaker than the rest, and of course to be more susceptible of taking on sympathetic action.

#### Of the Cure.

The cure of gout naturally divides itself into two kinds, namely, such as is proper to lessen the force of a paroxysm when it has made its appearance, and 2<sup>d</sup> to prevent, as far as possible the return of paroxysms after they have entirely disappeared.



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1<sup>st</sup> Among the most important means for abating  
pain and inflammation in a paroxysm of gout is  
continued and active purging, until the bowels are effec-  
tually evacuated. By this means the depraved action  
of the alimentary canal is altered, the paroxysm is  
broken, and the patient in a short time regains the  
entire use of his limbs. To be effectual, however, the  
purging should be continued for several days. The best  
purgatives in this case are Rhubarb and Magnesia, in  
combination. Considering the gout to be an inflamma-  
tory disease, it is somewhat astonishing that most  
of the European practitioners should be content with  
simply wrapping the inflamed limb in flannels and  
suffering the paroxysm to wear itself down to the  
extreme distress of the patient and danger of irre-  
versible injury to his constitution. And it is still  
more so, that Sydenham, who well knew the pain-  
ful consequences of constipation, should forbid purging,  
~~when constipation~~ when constipation exists or is  
induced, he says the gout comes threatening back



to the extremities. Notwithstanding the singularly beneficial effects of purging in gout, it will not be effectual in every case without the conjunction of other remedies, and a great variety of practice, according to circumstances, should be called to our aid.

Next to purging, bloodletting has been found most successful, and it becomes indispensably necessary, if there be determination to the lungs or head or stomach.

Diaphoretics are occasionally of service, and we are cautioned in their use by observing that nature sometimes puts a stop to the paroxysm by spontaneous diaphoresis or diarrhoea. After the pain is somewhat mitigated, cordial diaphoretics become proper, such as wine &c. opium and volatile salts &c. — Besides the remedies which have been mentioned, there are some local ones which have sometimes been of service, as sinapisms and blisters, and these are more especially called for if the paroxysm attack any of the vital parts, because they invite <sup>it</sup> from them to the extremities.





Topical bleeding by leeches, scarifications &c. may be used in some cases with advantage; also fomentations, warm poultices and the like applications, are sometimes said to give great relief. Dr. Kinglake, in his treatise on the gout, instead of making use of steam and warm applications, advises the contrary plan of treatment, namely, the reduction of increased heat by applying cloths moistened with cold water, to the part.

This method of treatment may be beneficial, but there seems to be some danger in making the experiment lest the disease should be thrown upon some vital part.

Beside the above-mentioned remedies, there are some that are entirely empirical, which have been highly celebrated in the cure of gout, only one of which I think it necessary to mention, as they have all fallen into discredit or nearly so. The Eau Medicinale of Colson has been much celebrated in France and other parts of Europe, and even in this country there are instances of its having been of singular efficacy.

Dr. Chapman mentions the case of a Mr. P. a man



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dist, whose feet were swelled with much fever and ac-  
tive inflammation. He took a tea-spoonful of the  
medicine on going to bed, he was purged, and the nausea  
and disturb produced by it were very great, but in  
the morning another dose cured him. Although much  
confidence has been heretofore reposed in this nostrum,  
yet it has occasionally showed such violent effects  
as to have been entirely laid aside by some practitioners.

Like the Portland powder, the habitual use of it is  
said to prove inimical to health, tho' this is not uni-  
for only this case.

When gout attacks any of the vital parts, as the  
brain, lungs heart &c. the treatment should be varied  
according to the part that is affected. In such cases  
the best remedies are volatile alkali, opium or both con-  
joined, much, ether &c. If a paroxysm seizes upon  
the stomach, very large doses become necessary, laudanum  
should be given to the amount of 60, 80 or 100 drops.

To assist these means we should use the warm bath  
and fomentations in order to mitigate the pain and



tranquillize the stomach. As the pulse is almost always  
delirious in some inflammation of this organ, we must  
pay no regard to it, but bleed if the other symptoms  
demand it. Also when it attacks the brain, lungs,  
&c, the treatment should be similar to that which  
is necessary in inflammation, in those parts from  
other causes, and we should endeavour to bring the cir-  
culation back to the extremities by blisters, sinapisms and  
other stimulating applications.

Although I do not believe that it is possible  
by any regimen or manner of life, completely to  
eradicate the susceptibility to gout, when it is  
once firmly fixed in the system, still I think a  
great deal may be done towards the prevention  
of paroxysms or a mitigation of them when they  
do occur. For this purpose nothing has ever been  
better than a rigid adherence to temperance to-  
gether with regular and continued exercise. A di-  
et consisting of milk and vegetables, with regular  
moderate exercise, have in most cases been found



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to succeed best, and as we cannot hope to cure it  
completely by any kind of medicaments, it is these  
and these only, from which we can expect any  
chance of warding off this most insidious and  
painful disease.

Inflammation

of  
the Stomach.

H. L. Davis

Admitted Sept 16, 1849

It was a great pleasure to see you  
and to hear of your success in the  
new and interesting work you are  
doing in the study of the history of  
the human mind.

Very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,  
J. L. Garrison

Ms. A. 9. 2. 10. 1. 10